

ARGUMENTS AND REMARKS

The above-identified patent application has been reviewed in light of the Examiner's Action dated November 10, 2009. In light of the amendments and arguments presented herein, Applicants respectfully submit that the claims are in condition for allowance.

Claim 16 has been objected to. Claims 1-7, 9-20, 25-29 and 32 have been rejected under 35 USC §112 as being indefinite. Claims 1-7 and 9-19 has been rejected under 35 USC §102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 5,199,836 to Gogarty ("Gogarty"). Claims 25-29 have been rejected under 35 USC §103 as being unpatentable over Gogarty in view of US Patent No. 6,764,245 to Popovski ("Popovski"). Claims 20 and 32 were held allowable.

Claims 1-7, 9-20, 23, 25-29 and 32 have been canceled, without intending to abandon or dedicate to the public any patentable subject matter. Claims 8, 21, 22, 24, 30, 31 and 33-37 were previously cancelled.

Claims 38-54 have been added and are now pending.

Examiner Interview

An Examiner's Interview was conducted between the undersigned and the Examiner on February 2, 2010 wherein the Examiner indicated that the claims would be allowable if they were amended to include, generally, the two objects being clamped. The Examiner suggested that the channel configuration possessed by both objects be specifically detailed as well. Finally, it was suggested that various details related to the interaction between the self aligning coupling device and associated engagement assembly be detailed and positively claimed. When asked whether it would be preferable to amend the claims of record or to cancel all pending claims and add new claims that included the features discussed, the Examiner indicated that the latter course of action would be acceptable.

The undersigned thanks the Examiner for his time and suggestions.

Claim Objections

Claims 16 has been objected to, but has been cancelled, thereby rendering this objection moot.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 1-7, 9-20, 25-29 and 32 have been rejected as being indefinite. Again, since these claims have been cancelled, this rejection has been rendered moot.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-7 and 9-19 have been rejected as being anticipated by Gogarty. Claims 1-7 and 9-19 have been cancelled, thereby rendering this rejection moot.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 25-29 have been rejected as being obvious in view of a combination of Gogarty and Popovski. As these claims have been cancelled, this rejection has also been rendered moot.

New Claims

Claims 38-54 have been added and include the subject matter generally discussed in the Examiner's interview referred to above. More specifically, Claim 38, the sole independent claim, has been added and positively claims a first object and a second object, each which include channels associated therewith. Claim 38 also includes an engagement assembly that is positioned within a first cut-away portion of a channel associated with one of the objects. A second cut-away portion is also positively claimed that selectively receives a head portion of a self-aligning coupling device, which allows the first object and the second object to be clamped together when the engagement assembly is actuated in such a way to translate the head of the self-aligning coupling device towards the engagement assembly. It is believed that the newly-presented claims contain subject matter that the Examiner indicated would be allowable over the prior art of record.

It is respectfully requested that prior to issuing a final rejection, that the Examiner contact the undersigned to discuss further amendments of the claims deemed required. Alternatively, the Examiner is invited to issue an Examiner's Amendment commensurate with his understanding of the claim limitations required.

It is noted from the Office Action that the original Claims 20-32 contained allowable subject matter, i.e., a nib. Notwithstanding the foregoing, Claim 42 contains similar limitations and thus should be allowable as well.

Conclusion

Based upon at least the foregoing, Applicants believe that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and such disposition is respectfully requested. In the event that a telephone conversation would further prosecution and/or expedite allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

SHERIDAN ROSS P.C.

By: /C.W. Mueller/

Craig W. Mueller
Registration No. 52,055
1560 Broadway, Suite 1200
Denver, Colorado 80202-5141
(303) 863-9700

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